

# **TERRITORY OF AMERICAN SAMOA**

**Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)**

## **COORDINATION PLAN**

**PROGRAM YEARS 2008 TO 2011**

**Mature American Samoans Seeking Skills Training**

**July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2012**

**OAA Title V**



Prepared and submitted by  
American Samoa Territorial Administration on Aging,  
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## Summary

*“The American Samoa Territorial Administration on Aging (TAOA) was established in 1975 to serve as the single point of contact for the aging population in the Territory; to deliver programs and services to all senior citizens and to advocate for their special needs. TAOA is headed by a Director who is appointed by the governor and confirmed by the American Samoa Legislature.”*

Page 1 - American Samoa State Plan on Aging for Federal Fiscal Years 2008 to 2011, submitted in July 2007 to the Administration on Aging

Designated by the Governor in 1975 to be the Single State Agency (SSA), the TAOA has administered funds and delivered services to the senior community for the past 33 years. Currently, the TAOA manages two primary funding rivulets from separate agencies. The U.S. Department of Labor provides the Territory with the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) funding under Title V of the Older Americans Act, while under the same Act, the AoA offers the Title III Program services to American Samoa. With an effective infrastructure firmly in place, an organization should have the capacity to establish and properly operate programs in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

It is often assumed that, as a small insular area, American Samoa enjoys an advantage vis-a-vis the general ability to communicate and work closely with its aging population, advisory consumer groups, government agencies, and other community partners. Quite the contrary, in many instances, a small isolated insular jurisdiction can have its own unique impediments to

communication and collaboration. Very real in small communities, these constraints are typically responsible for either perpetuating inconsistent practices resulting from constant, often illogical changes or presenting themselves as obstacles to bringing about the necessary changes in an organization and within communities.

In April of this year, a grants and program support person of Samoan descent with a strong background in family services advocacy programs was contracted on the recommendation of the Territorial Office on Federal Programs (OFP) under the Governor's Office. The immediate task was the preparation of the annual Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) program year grant application.

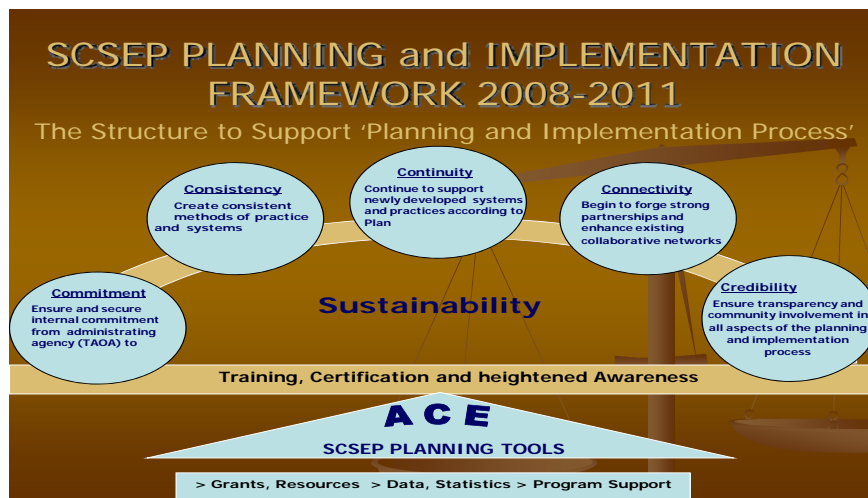
Challenges regarding work practices, clear policies, procedures, training, data collection infrastructure, fiscal and program management systems, overall management and commitment to planning are a few that have been identified.

It is envisioned that the clearly stated purpose by the Department of Labor to utilize a State/Territorial plan with a longer term, strategic view of the SCSEP within our Territory will be the strongest tool and motivator for improvement in providing services for the senior citizens of American Samoa. As the sole provider of SCSEP services, TAOA is currently undergoing a slow but sure review process of both the SCSEP and Title III programs overseen by the Administration on Aging.

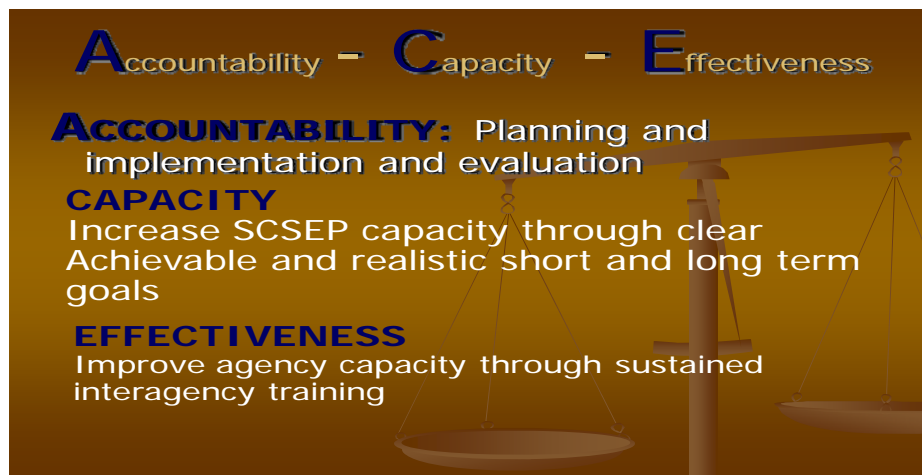
In the process of preparing and becoming oriented to TAOA functions, the advocate, as she is known in the community, became increasingly confident that inherent and entrenched past and present work practices could be managed through a positive and sustained approach to staff training, beginning from senior management and through to program staff.

The TAOA director is fully committed to management training sessions, which will commence in the month of August.

*The graphics included in this summary is used for the TAOA management training, and is adapted from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) model guiding prevention activities. (Graphic 1)*



(Graphic 2)



As required in Section 503(a)(2) of the 2006 OAA Amendments, the State Plan must follow the stated process as specified in the Act. In preparing and compiling our State Plan, an extensive process was initiated to determine existing documents pertaining to the SCSEP program along with efforts to gather information from within the SSA. These documents include;

- (i) Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended in 2006, Title V Community Service Senior Opportunities Act.
- (ii) Senior Employment Services Coordination Plan for Program Year 2005
- (iii) American Samoa State Plan on Aging for Fiscal Years 2008 - 2011
- (iv) SCSEP PY 2008 one year Grant Narrative
- (v) American Samoa's WIA Unified Strategic Territorial Plan.

As stated in the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) for State Plans, the plan serves to be a 'living' document. American Samoa's SCSEP State Plan will guide the Territory's strategic planning and ongoing operations of not only the SCSEP but for all programs for our senior citizens within the Territory. In utilizing clear and realistic expectations outlined in the OAA, the time has arrived for the Territory to take charge of its most treasured asset, next to our children - our aging population - through the development and implementation of this plan.

The plan for American Samoa for the coming years serves to be a realistic and honest look at achievable goals unique to American Samoa in meeting SCSEP program goals and will endeavor to abide by these guidelines.



## **SECTION ONE: Purpose of SCSEP State Plan**

Canoe paddling is not just a favorite past-time for the Territories and Pacific Islands. It has assisted and ensured our survival as island nations for centuries. In many ways, this Plan is our attempt to chart our course into the future for our aging population with a specific focus on the Territory's SCSEP. Paddling requires coordinated teamwork along with an understanding and respect for the ocean of our ever shifting environmental realities that continue to impact our journey.

The success of the Territory's SCSEP depends on how well we as a community commit to the plan along with our capacity to sustain the momentum in working together consistently over the next 4 years to expand employment opportunities for our senior citizens and provide appropriate support services for our senior citizens.

The purpose of the State/Territorial plan for American Samoa is to create a realistic and long term strategic plan of action for our island's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). It will foster both short-term and long-term coordination among key stakeholders, and is designed to be a 'living' document that will guide the strategic and ongoing operations of the SCSEP within the Territory.

The role of SCSEP in workforce development has been somewhat slow in responding to current and projected changes within our island's demographics, labor and economic and social climate. To date, there continue to be no placements in unsubsidized employment, a further indicator of limited connections with the community but one that can be overcome rapidly through a more planned and coordinated approach. In the process of developing the Territorial Plan, positive preliminary discussions and commitments have been secured in reviving



community involvement along with establishing and forging stronger partnerships in order to address workforce development for our senior citizens.

Collaboration, identification of core stakeholders and revisiting specific partnerships that were identified in the 2005 SCSEP coordination plan which to date have remained inactive, will be reactivated along with current community partners to develop and re-establish a stronger workforce development of SCSEP in the Territory.

**Community Awareness and Involvement:** The community has been largely neglected in its involvement in any form of consultation since the PY 2005 Coordination Plan. The current SCSEP Territorial Plan intends to revisit these commitments along with core agencies and community groups which have been identified since April of this year.

The strength of having most decisions made at the cultural, religious and government levels in relation to planning and implementation is the swiftness with which the community mobilizes on any initiative when sanctioned and supported by the leaders of these powerful entities which continue to guide our Territory in our journey into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

**Regional and Federal Level Support:** Renewed supportive relationships and contacts have been established with other State grantees within our region, more recently with the Alaska SCSEP through the Department of Labor, Employment Security Division. The assistance of the Alaska SCSEP program has proved to be invaluable in their support throughout the development of American Samoa's SCSEP State/Territorial Plan, and in being a regional mentor and partner in strengthening information and resource sharing between the Territory and other State Grantees.

Another commitment by TAOA has been, to actively strengthen and nurture ongoing working and supportive relationships with our Federal Project Officers from both the Department

of Labor and the Administration on Aging. A commitment to a more transparent relationship and mitigating matters relating to past practices of ‘appearing’ to be fine from the outside to best practices is an essential in the submission of this plan.

Thus, along with renewed commitment to forging community support for the SCSEP of our Territory, these key relationships with ‘outside’ supports for ‘inside’ action for SCSEP will ensure that the American Samoa’s Plan is strengthened as it unfolds over the next 4 years.



## **SECTION 2 – Involvement of Organizations and Individuals**

The photo above is the only ‘entry and exit’ points in and out of the Territory by sea. Pago Pago Harbor is said to be one of the safest and picturesque harbors in the world. This opening to the outside brings in the much needed resources that the island requires to function. It also allows us to venture out to seek the supports we need as an island community. The world is becoming smaller as the population increases. This plan requires that TAOA as an agency begin

to reach into the community and outside of our island for assistance in order for us to provide quality services for our aging and senior citizen population.

As required in Section 503(a)(2) of the 2006 OAA Amendments, the Territory has begun its consultations with the organizations listed in Table one. An overview of preliminary consultations between TAOA through the Program and Grants Manager/Advocate is included as Attachment 1. With American Samoa's program being revitalized through the development of this plan, many of the representatives are just now beginning to be invited and engaged in the SCSEP process of developing and implementing the Territory's SCSEP Plan.

**Local Boards under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA):** A strong relationship has been forged between WIA and the SCSEP who will endeavor to network and interact effectively and efficiently with the Administration and its Workforce Center located in the American Samoa Government Executive Office Building which was designed to be a one stop shop for government offices. The Workforce Development Commission of American Samoa (WDCAS), in partnership with the Department of Human Resources, will assist in the coordination of training-related activities for SCSEP participants. Services and activities will include core intensive training services relevant to the areas of placement. An Older Worker Specialist (OWS) will be designated to work with the WIA Workforce Center in assisting SCSEP referrals and making earnest efforts to place SCSEP participants into unsubsidized employment.

**Public and private non-profit organizations providing employment services:** The process of **community consultation** has begun with several agencies and groups being approached as in attachment 1. Although it is a priority to involve and engage the private sector along with non-profit organizations in identifying appropriate placement and employment

opportunities, this process will continue to evolve as the current relationships are formed and enhanced.

**Social service organizations providing services to older individuals:** There are numerous public and private community organizations that have the potential to develop specific services for senior citizens. In a survey conducted recently of SCSEP participants, almost 100% of those surveyed indicated that they do not use any other services in the community. This will change as the momentous move towards open participation and the development of ‘seamless’ services for the elderly take root in the community over the stated period of the SCSEP Plan. They will have the opportunity to comment and contribute to the implementation of the plan as it unfolds.

**Business organizations and Community-based organizations serving older individuals:** Like other community organizations that have in the past been inactive in SCSEP and TAOA programs, a commitment has been secured through informal consultations that will become concrete over the next 12 months. Besides the churches and village infrastructure, and cultural organizations, there are no formal community based organizations in the community at present that specifically serve the elderly.

**Collaboration and Key Partners:** There is a growing number of community-based organizations in the Territory dedicated to work in the area of health and human services. These organizations include the Pacific Island Center for Education and Development (PICED), which has specific facilities like the American Samoa Parental Information Resource Centers (ASPIRC) that provide educational, social and family supports for parents and caregivers throughout the main island of Tutuila.

Organizations such as the Center for Families with Developmental Disabilities (CFIDD) and various faith-based organizations have programs that provide community and social services for American Samoa's disadvantaged and special needs populations.

Besides public agencies, faith-based and other community organizations have been sought out to forge strong alliances for securing training and employment of SCSEP participants. The American Samoa Cancer Network being one of these has recently shown interest in training and utilizing researchers for its cancer prevention and palliative care program.

The Department of Human and Social Services (DHSS) and partners like the Department of health (DOH) continue to expand their activities through community outreach programming with an emphasis on 'engaging' and inviting community input. These existing partners of which SCSEP will connect to will lead to meaningful opportunities for SCSEP participants e.g. family support workers, advocates, translators, interpreters, health and educational support workers, specialized foster care givers/providers, artisans and crafts persons, arts/crafts and other instructors, etc. Many spheres of employment will underscore senior participant roles as valued contributors to the economy and enhance the worth, honor and respect traditionally bestowed upon them.

Fostering and maintaining coordination and collaboration with program key partners identified in Table 1, as well as other community and private sector allies, is critical in improving services for SCSEP participants.

*Table 1. – Listing of 11 Federally Funded Potential Government Host Agencies and \*1 Local Government Agency*

<b>Government Organizations</b>	
1. Dept. of Human and Social Services	DHSS
2. Dept. of Health	DOH
3. Dept. of Parks and Recreation	DPR
4. Dept. of Human Resources	DHR
5. Dept. of Education	DOE
6. American Samoa Community College	ASCC
7. Community Natural Resources (nee Land Grant)	CNR
8. Dept. of Youth and Women’s Affairs	DYWA
9. Lyndon B. Johnson Medical Authority	LBJ
10. Environmental Planning Agency	EPA
11. *Office of Samoan Affairs	*OSA
12. Department of Commerce	DOC

The existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with identified core agencies will be revisited and revised accordingly to include terms and conditions pertaining to inter-agency information sharing among employers, as well as to the clear delineation of their roles and responsibilities. A copy of the existing MOU with WDCAS is attached along with a letter of attestation from WIA indicating its support; other letters of attestation from partners are forthcoming as the plan becomes available for comment and review.

**Specific Strategies for Partnerships:** Presently, discussions have been initiated with the DHR’s WIA administration to make support services available on-site at the TAOA Center in Pago Pago making them more readily accessible to the senior population. With the formation of the SCSEP Program and Community sub-working groups identified in Section 5(a)(iii) of our current one year grant, the said groups will work in conjunction with the WDCAS to review the practicality of multiple one-stop career centers throughout the community rather than the current single center system.

In addition to existing core partners, the Department of Youth and Women's Affairs (DYWA) is currently compiling a comprehensive Directory of Health and Social Services enumerating agencies and specific programs that are integral parts of the network of supports for SCSEP participants and the overall TAOA services.

### **SECTION 3 – Solicitation and Collection of Public Comments**

As prefaced in the summary and stated in Section 2 of the plan, an open and inclusive planning process was conducted 3 years ago. Public comments have been in the way of initial contacts established through contacts outlined in Attachment 1. The current SCSEP State plan commits to revisiting and renewing the commitments secured in the Senior Employment Services Coordination Plan of 2005 for the sake of consistency and continuity along with the additions of the existing commitments that have been secured currently. Attachment 1 provides an overview of the connections and consultations that began in April and have continued into the present time.

### **SECTION 4 – Basic Distribution of SCSEP Positions within the Territory** *(Data and information gathered from recently submitted SCSEP Grant Narrative for PY2008 and the PY 2005 Senior Employment Services Coordination Plan)*

**A. Location of Positions:** The Territorial Administration on Aging (TAOA) is the sole Senior Community Service Employment Program grantee in American Samoa providing SCSEP services territorial-wide. For SCSEP purposes, American Samoa is divided into 4 distinct areas of the Territory including the Eastern, Central and Western districts, which

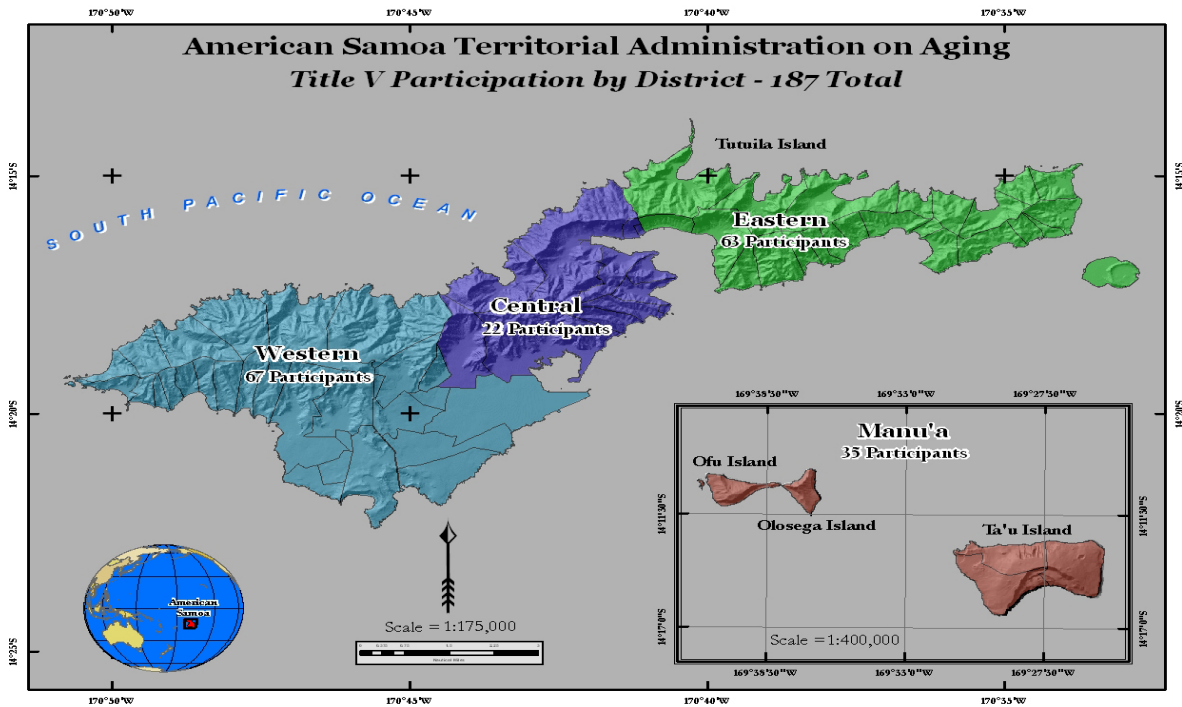
cover the main island of Tutuila and its offshore satellite, Aunu'u. Sixty-three miles east of Tutuila are the three small, but historically and culturally significant islands of Ta'u, Olosega, and Ofu, comprising the fourth and final district of Manu'a. *(A remote tiny coral atoll called Swains Island, geographically part of the Tokelau Islands but a political part of American Samoa since 1925, is listed by the 2000 Census as having a total population of 37. However, the number of people permanently dwelling there fluctuates greatly with few, if any, staying there for extended periods of time.)*

The SCSEP will strive to ensure that each of the four districts receives equitable number of positions. "Equitable distribution" refers to the process of fairly distributing American Samoa's SCSEP positions among the primary census tracts, in this case, the three districts. Therefore, equitable distribution for American Samoa will be achieved by proportionately serving the four districts in accordance with the 2000 Census.

The equitable distribution for each Program Year over the next 4 year period will thus be based on the number of positions the Territory's SCSEP allocation will allow. The number of enrollee positions allotted to a specific census tract (i.e. district) will be based on the number of eligible individuals in each district proportional to the total number of eligible individuals in the Territory. This Plan utilizes the 2000 U.S. Census data to compute the targeted number of positions allocated to a tract.



*Map 1: Territorial Regions being served through SCSEP Program 2007-2008*



There continues to be changes within authorized positions from Program Year 2007 as noted in the gradual reduction in authorized slots from 200 slots to 187 in 2008 and a further reduction to 133 slots now assigned for the Territory.

A basic distribution of SCSEP positions showing individuals placed within these four districts is presented in an Excel spreadsheet as part of the appendices. The Territory of American Samoa annually submits to the USDOL the distribution of the positions in each tract or district. If a tract receives more positions than its percentage of eligible individuals, that district is deemed 'over-served'.

If a district receives less than its percentage of eligible individuals, it is considered 'underserved'. Federal rules relating to the SCSEP requires the program to provide services addressing the relative distribution of the eligible program individuals that are;

residing in urban and rural areas; those with greatest economic need; those who are minority individuals; those who are at least 60 years of age, and those with greatest social need.

**B. Rural and Urban Populations:** According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, American Samoa has no urbanized areas (UA), only urban clusters (UC). The Census Bureau defines an urban cluster as consisting of densely settled territory that has a least 2,500 people but fewer than 50,000 people, except Guam. Based on Census Bureau definitions relating to urban and rural areas, American Samoa has six UC's – three counties in the Eastern District and three counties in the Western District. Two counties in the Eastern District and one county in the Western District are rural areas. The entire District of Manu'a, comprising five counties, is rural.

Over the next year, the American Samoa SCSEP fully expects to make significant changes and gains in fulfilling equitable distribution requirements by expanding public agencies involvement and soliciting potential non-profit host agencies and eligible participants through collaborative efforts with the WIA system (Department of Human Resources) and the Adult Basic Education Program (American Samoa Community College).

**C. Specific Population Groups:** Eligible individuals who must be afforded priority for services as provided at OAA sec.518(b) and certain population groups cited in the statute will be recruited accordingly.

## Section 5: Supporting Employment Opportunities for Participants

Information taken from the American Samoa five-year State Plan for Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the Department of Commerce describes the industries and occupations expected growth.

The industries and occupations most likely to provide substantial employment opportunities for SCSEP participants are food services, recreation, educational services, and health services. Typical applicants for SCSEP in American Samoa have the following skill levels and employment history:

- Multiple barriers to employment (age, and often disability on top of the obvious economic need that must be there to qualify for enrollment, low-literacy, etc)
- Often low levels of education (completed anywhere from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to high school)
- Often come with a gap from the time they were last employed and the time at which they seek help from SCSEP to re-enter the workforce.
- Often low skills levels or skills that were acquired many years ago and before the technology changes that have come fast and furious to the workplace in the past decade. Many of the people who come to us need to not only learn a skill but to assimilate to a workplace setting and the according expectations
- Seniors who experience cultural, social or geographic isolation
- Seniors with poor employment history or prospects
- Seniors who are receiving public assistance (food stamps)
- Limited English
- Some past employment experience in service-type fields such as cooking, janitorial, manual labor and basic clerical or retail experience

Through the partnership and collaboration with the AS Workforce Development Board and Workforce Center staff, the TAOA SCSEP Program staff will ensure that skills training needs meet the needs of both participants and employers. See Section-6 for a detailed description **Labor Market Overview**. With evident socio and economic shifts occurring in American Samoa, the SCSEP requires specific strategies to adequately address these diverse socioeconomic changes. The need to be inter-dependent within our economy is crucial. The proper training and employment of senior citizens, along with their integration into existing infrastructures, is more of a necessity

than a vague possibility. As cited in the 2008 CEDS, the 2005 CEDS revealed that “with a few exceptions, virtually all of American Samoa’s secondary employment is dependent upon cannery and federal expenditures.” Given the uncertain future of the canneries in the Territory, it is not at this point, an option in exploring employment opportunities. These realities therefore, must be duly considered in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of employment opportunities for senior citizens.

*Table 2 – American Samoa Export Base &  
Service Employment and Percent Distributions, 2004*

<b>Basic Sector</b>	<b>Employment</b>	<b>Percent Distribution</b>
Canneries	4,598	45
Federal Revenue Related	4,720	46.5
Tourism and Misc	833	8.2
<b>Service Sectors</b>		
Secondary Activities	5,440	74.0
Local Revenue Related	1,911	26.0
Total Service	7,351	100.0
<b>Total Employment</b>	17,502	

*Source: Computed from data provided by the American Samoa Government Department of Commerce, “Appendix A of 2008 American Samoa Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy*

**Economic Landscape:** As Table 2 above depicts, the two sectors with the greatest number of employees in the Territory during 2004 were the canneries and federally revenue related. Those two sectors remain today the largest employers. As in previous years, TAOA is

charged with the responsibility of ‘actively’ engaging the community in broadening opportunities for SCSEP participants to be integrated into existing government, non-government, and other service sectors through its training and placement processes. Germane to population characteristics, the current American Samoa State Plan on Aging pinpoints the Western District as having the highest concentration of senior citizens.

**Growing Industries:** With the prevalence of federal revenue related jobs in our community, this is one area where the strengths of being inter-related in sharing costs and utilizing existing resources across these programs will be aggressively pursued. The opportunities for partnerships and networking are great as ASG departments and offices, community agencies, and other sub-grantees are guided towards implementing program evaluation that is effective, transparent, evidence-based, and conducive to positive program change and improvement. A powerful effort will be made towards a ‘weaving’ of TAOA programs and the integration of SCSEP participants into the existing and projected work environment.

In the 2008 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for American, the Government’s stated **vision** recognizes that; “People want better lives for themselves and their posterity. This means *raising education levels and economic opportunities.*” (Emphasis added.) To achieve this vision, the Territory has established five specific **economic goals**: (1) To Increase Income and Production; (2) To Foster Economic Diversity thereby Expanding Opportunity for Local Workers; (3) To Develop Local Human Resources; (4) To Strengthen Environmental Preservation; and (5) To Preserve Cultural Aspirations.”

The CEDS also identifies **the following high wage/growing industries**:

- 1) Fisheries and Agriculture,
- 2) Telecommunications and Information Technology,
- 3) Manufacturing, and
- 4) Health Care and
- 5) Education.

Through planning and coordination with Workforce Investment Act (WIA) initiatives, the program will focus on the health care, education, and human services fields.

**Career Opportunities for SCSEP Participants:** Currently, there are no SCSEP participants holding unsubsidized employment in those industries that offer career opportunities. This has been largely due to inconsistent and ineffectual practices, uncoordinated internal and external systems, high turnover in leadership, and inadequate support for the organization that houses the program.

**Projected Jobs:** In order to more accurately project realistic employment prospects for SCSEP participants, career opportunities need to be identified and accessible. This will involve coordinated systems and practices of accountability, capacity building and evaluation processes occurring at all levels, not only within TAOA, but, more importantly, throughout the entire community. With 'high risk' Federal grantee status hanging over many of the public agencies in the Territory, the sobering reality of the need for accountability, effective partnerships, capacity building, and creative integration and sharing of existing resources serves as a stark reminder to pursue a practical and dynamic course in the mapping of TAOA's journey to securing meaningful employment and the weaving of participants productively into the community with unsubsidized jobs.

**Assignment to Community Service Employment:** TAOA recognizes that assigning participants to Community Service Employment will not succeed without the buy-in of the community at all levels. Interagency relationships and effective partnerships will need to be established and nurtured, a process which has begun in earnest by the hiring of a Program and Grants Manager with extensive background in grants administration and community service. Moreover, pervasive community outreach and widespread media support with powerful messages ‘honoring our aging population’ and striving for the integration of senior citizen employment in the SCSEP planning and implementation processes will be top priorities.

**Projected Jobs and Training Opportunities:** Host agencies like the DHSS, the DOH, ASCC’s CNR and the DOE are some organizations within the human services sector that will be engaged in providing employment training for participants. It is envisioned that this process will ultimately result in unsubsidized employment opportunities for SCSEP participants.

**Community Service Employment Activities:** With the diversity of health, education, and human service programs offered by the various departments and agencies, as noted in Table 2 above, the value of having an available pool of experienced and trained workers to support the existing and growing workforce will be attractive to prospective employers.

**Participants’ Assessments and Individual Employment Plans (IEP):** To ensure that community service employment assignments are linked to Individual Employment Plans (IEP), the program staff will receive broad training on a continuing and regular basis to conduct comprehensive intake and assessment procedures in order to accurately identify the participant’s overall capabilities. The participant’s IEP is the main factor in determining what type of community service assignment will be thoroughly explored in order for SCSEP staff to maximize opportunities provided by the program. Furthermore, the IEP will be an actual

working tool to ensure that the participant's training and employment activities and support services are regularly maintained and updated in a conscientiously applied program of essential concentrated worksite, home and community care.

## **Section 6: Increasing participant placement in Unsubsidized Employment and Employer Outreach**

As in previous years, this area will continue to be strengthened by identifying a program staff and one Older Worker Specialist (OWS) to provide specific support services for SCSEP participants. At the initial point of intake through a comprehensive assessment process, participant needs will be identified and monitored. Supports, which include visual/auditory aids (i.e eye glasses and hearing devices), mobility assistance (e.g. walking canes, special shoes, fuel allowances), and other assistance, that relate directly to securing unsubsidized employment for participants will be noted and suitably addressed.

A fundamental task of all SCSEP staff is to understand their local labor market demands. This drives the IEP and community service work based training assignment and ensures that participants are trained and placed in specific jobs where they live. A variety of methods will be used to achieve the placement of participants into unsubsidized employment:

- Negotiating hiring (OJT) contracts with current and prospective host agencies.
- Helping participants prepare resumes
- Considering required registration of participants at the Workforce Center.
- Rotating work assignments in conjunction with the IEP.
- Increasing contact with private sector employers.
- Coordinate job placements, job search, and employer orientation with Workforce Center Staff.

The Key SCSEP program staff will be responsible in assisting participants to find jobs and developing employer leads. This will also be coordinated with the Workforce Center staff out in the field.



Who will be expected to know the occupations that are high growth and in demand in the Territory. This information will be essential in helping developing realistic job goals for SCSEP participants. The information will also be used to develop training options.

In addition to methods mentioned previously, the SCSEP staff will keep abreast of business trends and employment opportunities through the Chamber of Commerce, American Samoa Government (ASG) Personnel Office, local news paper (Samoa News & Post), media and radio stations. SCSEP staff will continually work to expand their knowledge about and opportunities with the businesses in their community. Staff will increase access to new employers through leveraging existing business relationships, improve marketing of our older workers to the private sector, identify new or high growth employment opportunities suitable for an older workforce. All of these efforts will produce significant SCSEP program benefits and will help participants gain the skills to meet business demands.

Many employers have career ladders for various occupations. However, the majority of SCSEP participants do not initially convey an interest in pursuing a career. In reality, most participants seek work experience for other benefits such as physical and mental activity, and social interaction. Since majority of SCSEP participants are of Samoan ancestry, employment is often a means to pay their cultural expected share for traditional activities such as title bestowals, funerals, wedding, and other church or family responsibilities.

Employers demand for SCSEP participants who are interested in pursuing a structured career ladder has not been widely evident. However, the SCSEP program has transitioned some participants into unsubsidized employment that has led to promotions such as kitchen workers at LBJ (dish washers) promoted to taking orders for customers. The program will continue its efforts to identify job that are of interest to SCSEP participants and that shows an opportunity for advancement.

**General Training:** Training can focus on skills that are not occupational specific skills but are still needed to increase or upgrade skills support preparation for employment. Examples include basic education, English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> language, world-of-work skills, and basic computer training.

Training will be consistent with each SCSEP participant's assessment and IEP. Basic computer training will continue to be emphasized and is currently being provided by the TAOA training staff. Training is also provided by the Feleti Barstow Library in Utulei, as well as the Workforce Center Computer Lab. In addition, the program will provide the On-the-Job Experience training option, which is available to qualified employers to encourage them to hire job-ready SCSEP participants.

Workshops will also be provided to the SCSEP participants which cover different aspects of the job-seeking skills process and topic relating to health, consumer information, social security and retirement benefits. Workshops include speakers from the community, government, and the local business community (Chambers of Commerce). In addition, mini-workshops will be arranged for specific industries such as home health care, etc.

Participants seeking full time employment who would improve their potential for transition into unsubsidized employment with skills will be encouraged to attend programs offered through the DHR-Workforce Center. Additional services offered through the Workforce Center are made available to SCSEP participants, when appropriate. Participants who need additional help to transition to unsubsidized employment will be provided a copy of the Monthly Events Calendar from the Workforce Center. Also, appropriate referrals will be made to the Vocational Rehabilitation, ASCC-Adult Education or as needed.

## **Section 7: Community Service Needs**

The two sectors with the greatest number of employees in the Territory during 2004 were the canneries and federally revenue related. Those two sectors remain today the largest

employers. As in previous years, TAOA is charged with the responsibility of ‘actively’ engaging the community in broadening opportunities for SCSEP participants to be integrated into existing government, non-government, and other service sectors through its training and placement processes. Germane to population characteristics, the current American Samoa State Plan on Aging pinpoints the Western District as having the highest concentration of senior citizens.

**Growing Industries:** With the prevalence of federal revenue related jobs in our community, this is one area where the strengths of being inter-related in sharing costs and utilizing existing resources across these programs will be aggressively pursued. The opportunities for partnerships and networking are great as ASG departments and offices, community agencies, and other sub-grantees are guided towards implementing program evaluation that is effective, transparent, evidence-based, and conducive to positive program change and improvement. A powerful effort will be made towards a ‘weaving’ of TAOA programs and the integration of SCSEP participants into the existing and projected work environment.

With the diversity of health, education, and human service programs offered by the various departments and agencies, as noted in Table 1. The value of having an available pool of experienced and trained workers to support the existing and growing workforce will be attractive to prospective employers.

## **Section 8: Coordination with other programs, Initiatives and Entities**

**Workforce Investment Act:** American Samoa operates as a single service delivery area. The WDCAS serves as the local and state workforce investment board. The Board and the designated Entity (DHR) takes the lead in developing the Workforce or the One-Stop delivery System based on the services and strategies included in the American Samoa WIA 5-Year Plan. Twenty agencies/entities designated as mandatory partners in WIA are part of the Workforce delivery system in the Territory.

**Collaboration with other partners:** TAOA will meet with the Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator to exchange information, discuss referral procedures and additional efforts to enhance coordination on behalf of or our SCSEP participant. The SCSEP will meet with Adult Education Coordinator (ASCC) to schedule courses or training for SCSEP referrals. American Samoa does not have any WIRED grantees or President's High Growth Job Training Initiatives.

**Leveraging Resources from other Key Partners:** As we begin to expand on a more diverse partnership base, we will strive to embrace and expand our rivulet of leveraged resources. Over the past year, the American Samoa SCSEP has been able to secure in-kind contributions from local community businesses through the solicitation of food and other type donations for various functions and activities. Workshops have been financed and/are provided by local agencies, most notably the DELTA Consortium and ASCC. Contributions of money, equipment and supplies have been provided by various organizations and these strategies will continue to be pursued.

**Collaboration with Host Agencies:** This has been an area of concern in SCSEP development. Establishing, nurturing and maintaining positive working relationships with existing and potential host agencies are critical in securing training and employment opportunities for participants. Developing clear guidelines, procedures and understanding among community and government partners will be an area of increasing focus during PY 2008.

**Community Integration and Employment Assignments:** The ultimate aim for the SCSEP is for participants to receive optimum support so that they may have the best opportunity to become productive members of the workforce. Therefore, the program will work in close and constant coordination with host agencies to establish specific training and recruitment processes to ensure participants are matched according to their experience, expertise, and overall individual potential and capacity, as assessed in their IEPs. Establishing clear processes through proper documentation of program procedures, practices, and policies will ensure that these efforts are appropriately sustained.

TAOA plans to request supplemental funds from the Legislature (Fono) for personnel costs, and additional funds for SCSEP training slots and to assist in coordinating programs, initiatives and entities to come together to provide seamless training services and employment opportunities for American Samoa's SCSEP.

In addition, through the process of proactive community involvement, this plan will work towards securing support and commitment from Government and Non-Government organizations to secure 1 or more employment slots within their funding streams for SCSEP participants. This will ensure that the SCSEP program is able to actively work with the community to literally 'graduate' enrollees from the SCSEP workforce into the community workforce in the areas identified.

## **Section 9: Avoidance of Disruption in Service**

In the event that new census data indicates a shift in location of eligible population or when there is over-enrollment for any other reason, the American Samoa SCSEP will effectuate a gradual shift that encourages current enrollees in subsidized community service positions to

move into unsubsidized employment in order to make positions available for eligible individuals in the areas where there has been an increase in the eligible population.

If the American Samoa SCSEP is required to effectuate a shift in position distribution due to over-enrollment, SCSEP participants affected will be notified immediately after consultation with the respective host agency directors. Notification will be in writing and will take place at least 60 days prior to the date the transfer is to become effective. The affected enrollee will be requested to attend a meeting with the host agency representative and the SCSEP manger in person to develop transition plan for the successful transfer of the enrollee.

After meticulously coordinating any proposed changes in distribution with its service partners, the American Samoa SCSEP will submit said changes – that occur after submissions of the equitable distribution report – to American Samoa’s Federal Project Officer for approval.

## **Section 10: Improvement of SCSEP Services.**

Future Planned changes include the following:

**Staff development training.** Significant changes to the SCSEP during this decade have placed greater emphasis on performance measures, and greater priority on enrolling those program-eligible individuals who are least marketable and who have the most barriers to employment.

SCSEP personnel will need to continually increase expertise and knowledge to meet performance expectations, and to effectively assist the targeted population in achieving long term employment. Such areas of expertise include outreach and recruitment of partnerships, participants, training sites, employers, counseling, case management, case note writing,

participant file maintenance, and statistical analysis. Greater knowledge of targeted populations, such as the individuals with disabilities, those with mental health issues is needed to better serve the participants.

